



# The Old Collyerians' Association

Spring 2013

## President's message

**A**t long last, having managed to escape the presidency, it seems that my turn could not be avoided any longer. I am honoured to take the job, and although not living in the Horsham area at present - an omission that will be rectified some time this year - I will do my best to serve the OCA.

It seems customary for presidents to have a particular campaign. Most of those centre on encouraging more, younger, people to join the OCA, which is of vital importance, for no other reason than to ensure the association's survival. I am mindful of my own experience, in that when I left Collyer's I had no interest whatsoever in an alumni association, and it is probably fair to say that the OCA of the time had even less interest in as undistinguished and troublesome pupil as me.

It was - as I remembered just before the excellent winter reunion (probably the best

for many years) - not until some 30 years later that a late night conversation in a now disappeared pub not far from Horsham revealed the fact that out of all the people present, who covered a very wide age range, all but one of us had been to Collyer's. Now, as I asked myself, if all my drinking companions were Old Collyerians, then surely the OCA must be worth investigating further?

I am sure that there are many others - including many from the sixth form college that took over from the former single-sex grammar school - who have reached their 40s or 50s and are wondering what became of their teenage cronies. The OCA can help give the answer. And these are the people I want to attract during my year.

Collyer's served me very well, even though I left it before the sixth form. The range of education, and the ways some excellent teachers had of making sure that what they

## Contact us

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John Meese

Peter Ticehurst,

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Derek Sturt

**College representative:** Jackie Johnston (principal)

E-mail is the best way to reach us: please send all correspondence for the OCA to [ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)

told us stayed with us, served me well in later life. Like many people who go through a mid-life crisis, as it has come to be known, I got totally bored with my post-Collyer's career and after several fruitless attempts, I managed to change direction. I had been told that my abilities pointed me far more in the direction of journalism, something I had always fancied, than engineering. But there was a problem - I, approaching middle-age and relatively unqualified, would be competing for jobs with younger university graduates. Amazingly, that did not seem to be a problem in the real world. Having landed a job in my chosen field, I

found that thanks to my general education I could more than hold my own against the whizz-kids. Thanks Collyer's; I will be forever grateful.

A couple of items in this newsletter remind me that however wonderful the 1960s were as a time to be growing up, it wasn't the best period in the school's own history. But there was much to be thankful for, the experience of attending such an august and respected establishment equipped us well for whatever life we chose. Even a country bumpkin (I travelled up every day from Henfield by steam train) could benefit from a good education as provided by Collyer's.

## Website and historic records

**W**e continue to receive some gems from the past, sent in primarily by members who find these when moving house - that great leveller of many things. Items received during the past year include photographs, and various scans of bygone school publications.

Alan Taylor (1956-63) mailed an early 1960s group photo of the CCF Naval contingent taken at HMS Sultan together with a copy of the 1959 school photograph in excellent condition. Alan has lived in Australia since the 1970s and was in the process of moving house from Rutherford NSW across to Mildura when he decided to donate the material.

Peter Shilson (1955-1962) kindly sent scans of various School Play programmes, once again from the early 1960s together with a picture which provided some memory-bashing to identify names.

Alan Reynolds (1953-55) rediscovered some *Collyerian* magazines in a box in his garage and may well have thrown them away. Fortunately, he made contact first and we were very pleased to take them off his hands. Upon receipt we found that they were adorned with the signatures of most, if not all, of the staff of that period. All the infamous names are there written in their own fair hands. This appears to have been quite a tradition at the time as Alan recalls lining up with classmates for the 'autographs' whenever a new magazine was published (see opposite).

To say we were delighted to now have such a record is an understatement. However, it had its downside when remembering that those same signatures were very familiar on our school reports!

One signature not providing such woeful memories was that of 'Joseph' which was 'supplied' of course by 'Fred' Bennett.

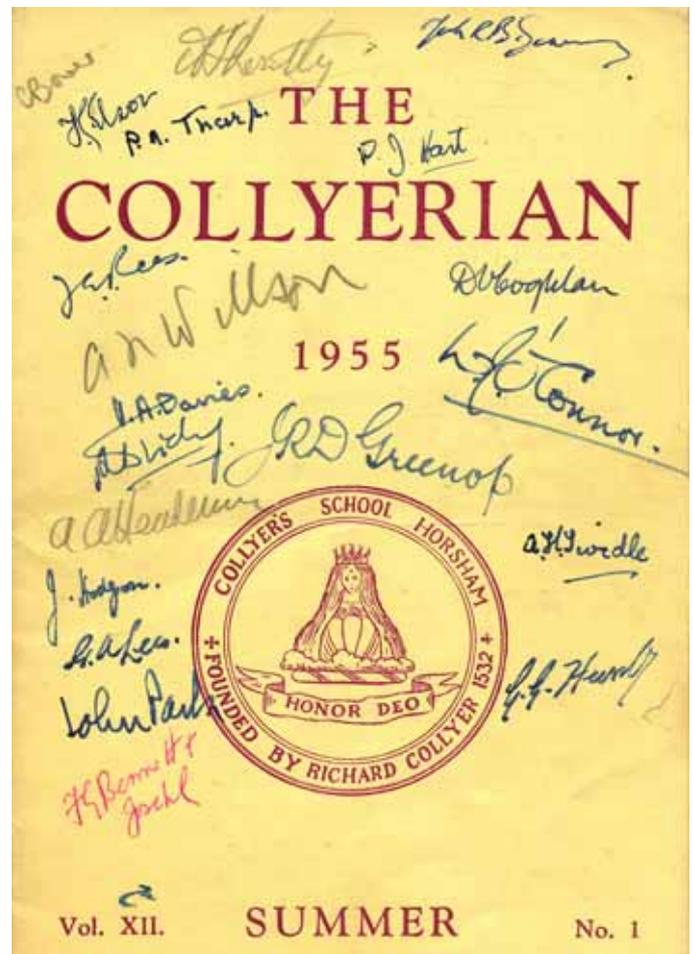
Some of the above material is already on our website at [www.oldcollyerians.org.uk](http://www.oldcollyerians.org.uk) and some is in preparation. For some we may well need help, for example school photographs. As one such example, Alan Taylor provided photocopies of the school photo and appended all the names he could remember.

Filling the gaps will probably be a forthcoming online 'challenge' to you once we have a suitable vehicle for organising their display.

To the above Old Collyerians and others who have said they will 'dig stuff out' we send our grateful thanks. Historical records, as they now are, will disappear without your support.

If you think you may still have anything of interest, please do let either myself or our Archivist, Nick Weller, know and we will be happy to help preserve it. Our email links are on the website.

Gary Jones, OCA Webmaster



# Flying Officer Alexander Bone

'The final page in the story': World War Two Lancaster bomber and its crewmen's remains discovered in German field 69 years after it crashed. Anthony Barnard reports.



A few issues ago you may remember that we reported Arthur Bone's attendance at the annual dinner and that there was another article on his brother Alex who was shot down in a Lancaster Bomber flying on an abortive raid to the Skoda factory in Czechoslovakia in 1943.

Since then a group of German historians have located the site where the plane crashed, excavated the site and recovered remains of the aircraft and crew members. The following report has been created using information provided by BNPS and published on the *Daily Mail* web site.

Sixty-nine years after their burning plane plunged to the ground after being shot down by the Germans, the remains of seven Lancaster Bomber crewmen have been recovered. They were discovered by a team of German historians who spent hours digging a muddy field near Frankfurt looking for the RAF crew after an eyewitness who saw the plane crash guided them to the site. Lancaster ED427 was one of 327 bombers that took part in a raid on the Skoda armaments works at Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. On their return to their base at RAF Fiskerton, Lincs, they came under fire from German anti-aircraft flak.

Eyewitness Peter Menges saw the plane on fire before it crashed into a field outside the village of Laumersheim, near Frankfurt, and exploded into a fireball. It is not unknown why the men did not manage to parachute from the plane. However, Peter Elliott from the Royal Air Force Museum said it may have been a case of 'too little time, or too much damage.' With eyewitnesses reporting the aircraft to be on fire, it seems likely that one or more anti-aircraft shells would have hit the airframe. The explosions from these hits, and resulting shrapnel, could well have killed or

mortally wounded, or disabled, crew members directly. The resulting fire and smoke may have also disabled crew members or, possibly, overwhelmed or suffocated them.

The archaeological dig in Germany was questioned by some locals who couldn't understand why the team were searching for British airmen who bombed their cities.



Uwe Benkel

Uwe Benkel, who led the search, said they felt obliged to find the missing men and bring comfort to their families who knew nothing of how or where they died. Some of the relatives have now expressed their gratitude to the amateur historians and are hoping to finally bury their loved ones seven decades after their deaths.

Mr Benkel, 51, said: "A lot of people couldn't understand what we were doing and said things like why were we digging up British airmen who bombed our cities and killed our people? Our view is that this is past and history, it was 70 years ago. We are another generation. We do research on missing men who are still in the ground. It doesn't make a difference if they are German or British; they were young men who fought and died for their country for which they deserve a proper burial in a cemetery. We do it for the families. For them, it is a bit like reading a book with the last page missing. When we find the bodies, we are writing the final page for them."

The seven-strong crew - pilot Alex Bone, flight engineer Norman Foster, navigator Cyril Yelland, wireless operator Raymond White, bomb aimer Raymond Rooney, air gunner Ronald Cope and air gunner Bruce Watt - died in April 1943.

Lancaster ED427 was one of 36 bombers that failed to make it back to Britain that night. The impact of the crash created a large crater in the ground.



Excavation: Volunteers dig within the crater, exhuming the fateful planes remains (all pictures courtesy BNPS)

At the time of the crash the German military recovered two of the bodies from the wreckage - thought to have been Sgt Cope and Canadian Pilot Officer Watt - and buried them.

After the war, the British Air Ministry tried to find the final resting place of the crew but with no success. It was assumed their aircraft had crashed in the sea and their names were added to the Runnymede Memorial in Surrey dedicated to 20,000 servicemen with no known grave.

Mr Benkel, a health insurance clerk by day, began researching military plane crashes 25 years ago and now leads a voluntary recovery group that has examined 400 crashes and recovered the bodies of 38 airmen. He recently began looking into ED427 and found Mr Menges, 83, culminating in the dig.

Mr Benkel said: "Peter lived in the next village. He saw the plane coming down on fire and saw the explosion. His parents didn't allow him to go and see the plane that night. He went the next morning and the German military were there. From what he saw the majority of the parts were on the surface and taken away. There was a big crater in the ground, within a couple of days it was filled in with rocks and dirt and was covered up for the next 69 years. Peter showed me the site and we used metal detectors and radar photos to examine it."

The team dug five metres deep in a 100 square metre area and found sections of the fuselage, cockpit, landing gear, a tyre, a burnt parachute, tools and ammunition. Mr Benkel believes the remains they found are those of F/O Bone, Sgt Foster, Sgt Yelland, Sgt Rooney and Sgt White as these men would have been in the cockpit at the time.



*The site in Laumersheim, Germany, where the Lancaster crashed 69 years ago*



*The remains of a Merlin engine were also unearthed by the team*

#### LANCASTER BOMBERS BY NUMBERS

**19** Victoria Crosses won by men of Bomber Command, including Guy Gibson, who led the Dam Busters raid

**125,000** Bomber Command air crew serving during WWII

**55,573** died in action, a death rate of 44%

**4%** average chance of being shot down per mission - but crews had to complete at least 30. Chances of surviving war lower than infantry officer in First World War trenches

**9,838** bomber crew became prisoners of war

**1.3m** tons of bombs dropped by the Allies on Germany

**635,000** is the estimate of German civilians killed

#### POSTSCRIPT

F/O Bone was only piloting Lancaster ED 427 on that fateful day in April 1943 as a result of a chain of tragic events. At the end of 1942 he was, at the age of 32, working in Canada as a Royal Air Force flying instructor when his wife, in England was taken seriously ill and he was granted compassionate leave to visit her. By the time that his troop ship arrived back in England she had already died. At the height of the bombing campaign of German cities, the RAF was so short of experienced pilots, that instead of returning Alex to Canada, he was transferred to Bomber Command to fly Lancaster bombers. The raid on Pilsen was only his seventh operational flight. Furthermore, the pathfinder aircraft leading the raid illuminated the wrong target, and not a single bomb was dropped on the Skoda factory.

When arrangements are finally in place for the interment of the remains of the crew of ED 427, Arthur Bone, the last remaining brother of this illustrious Old Collyerian flying family and now well into his 90s, is hoping that he will be able to travel to Germany to pay his last respects.

# Summer reunion Sunday 30 June 2013

**F**or this year's Summer Reunion we have decided to make a visit to the much-loved family home of Sir Winston Churchill at the beautiful location of Chartwell in Kent. We have put the date back a little in the hope that we may have rather better weather than we've been subjected to in the last two years.

Chartwell is a National Trust property so if you come along and are members of the NT entry is free (but

remember to bring your membership cards and car parking badge). If not the entry charges are:-

Adult £12.00 (or Gift Aid £13.40).

Child £6.00 (or Gift Aid £6.80).

There is also a car park which is pay and display: no charges are shown on the website but I can obtain further information on this should this be required.

Entry to the main house is timed but this cannot be booked in advance. There is an excellent restaurant on site (self-service).

If you would like to join our merry band on the day would you please let me know as soon as possible: see my details below. If you are not NT members please advise me as we can obtain a reduced group rate for 15 or more persons if booked in advance (and I will collect your payment to cover on the day). If there are not enough to do this please arrange to pay directly to Chartwell on the day.

Derek Sturt - OCA Social Secretary,  
8, Old Guildford Road,  
BROADBRIDGE HEATH, Horsham,  
West Sussex RH12 3JU.

e-mail : sturt99@hotmail.com.  
Further information on Chartwell  
can be obtained from:  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk/  
chartwell](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell)



*Chartwell, near Westerham, Kent*

## Advance Notice

### WINTER REUNION : SATURDAY 16th NOVEMBER, 2013

Just a gentle reminder of this year's annual Winter Reunion (AGM & Dinner) which will be held at the College on the above date : PLEASE MAKE A NOTE OF THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY.

AGM at 4 p.m. (attendance not compulsory but appreciated if you can manage it)

Dinner 6.30 p.m. for 7 p.m. (bar open from 5.30 p.m.). Last year's was one of the best in recent memory thanks to excellent company, food, drink and the improved setting of the Duckering Hall and it's a great chance to meet up with old friends and make some new ones.

Full details will be shown in the Autumn Newsletter (menu, price etc.) and also on our website ([www.oldcollyerians.org.uk](http://www.oldcollyerians.org.uk)) in due course.

# Collyer's Playing Fields

These reflections were sent following the publication of details of a recent planning consent relieved by the College for construction of additional teaching facilities at the College, that appeared in the *West Sussex County Times*.

**R**eading about the plans to expand Collyer's onto a small part of its playing fields - a proposal which I am happy to support - brought back a flood of sporting memories from my time at Collyer's 1962-9. When I started in fact there were no playing fields for about a year - as they were being re-seeded - so in the winter, sports practice took place in Horsham Park and a kindly resident of Richmond Road allowed us to use two cricket nets (erected for the purpose?) in his back garden. The following bitter winter meant that the playing fields were out of use so games 'lessons' were 'murder ball' in the gym comprising a medicine ball and two teams of about 30 boys each...

Around that time, the fields were out of use anyway because of the many stones that had appeared so 'stone-picking' was the standard (and frequent) punishment for minor breaches of discipline. Three hour Saturday morning detentions were monthly events and corporal punishment was still 'administered' by the Headmaster in the early 1960s until Mr Slynn (of fond memory and a member of MCC) took over.

From about 1965, however, sport really took off on beautiful level fields with the CIBA building dominating the background by the railway line. Cross-country was compulsory with a 'Muddy Lane' for the first years graduating to 'Junior Pondtail' and then 'Senior Pondtail'. The cross country practices were followed by the main event which started at the CIBA end so you had to run across the whole playing field before starting

the run proper in Hurst Road! Unfortunately, Rugby was dispensed with from 1962 but soccer (not my forte) thrived as did cricket.

There were two fine cricket squares as well as four or five cricket nets where visiting county coach George Cox enlightened many of us. Indeed, Mr Brooshooff regularly took a carload of us down to the county ground at Hove to be coached by Sussex professionals on weekday evenings. The net effect of all this was that at least one Collyer's cricket team (under 14) were Sussex cup winners and the first team (as I recall) was unbeaten in a season. All this was down to the dedication of a number of Collyer's staff (not all PE teachers) such as Mr Thomas (Geography), Mr Burke (History) and the aforementioned Mr Brooshooff (Science) as well as Mr Slynn who always bowled the first over for the staff in the annual Staff v School cricket match - which the School invariably (?) won!

There were aspects of Collyer's Boys Grammar School which do not bring back such fond memories but there were many staff that I also remember with affection and gratitude away from the sports field: (I will omit the nicknames!) - Miss Young, Mr Wilson, Mr and Mrs Davis, Mr Collins, Mr Fyson, Mr Hamer, Mr Alner, Mr Henderson, Mr Whitbourn, Mr Hodgson, Mr Twidle and Mr Park.

I can still sing the old school song - and do!

Every best wish to the Collyer's of the present and the future.

*Geraint (Gerry) Thomas, Ifield, Crawley*

## The Old School Chair

This article is taken from a letter received from Malcolm Papes, who was at Collyer's in the late 1950s and early 1960s, and hopes that his memories "of Collyer's days when it was a proper school" do not prove too gross for modern susceptibilities.

**I**wonder whether the school chair, affectionately known as 'The Old Lady', is still around, or if not, what happened to it. Even by 1960, it was a cumbersome piece of furniture, well carved with the school motto on the back, and had been a labour of love by a much earlier generation of youthful school carpenters. It lived at the top end of the old first floor library opposite the chapel, and on wet breaks could accommodate four or five junior boys at a go. Its glory came on Founder's Day and other ceremonial occasions

when it was lugged down the stairs and taken to the Ritz Cinema to be occupied by the guest of honour.

The library was well-managed by 'Mungo' Park (Get out of my Library!) and his band of volunteers. It was used by sixth-formers for private study during the day, open to the general school at breaks and lunchtime, and stayed open until about 5.30 in the evening when it was locked up. It was unlocked again at about 8.30 in the morning by a volunteer drawn from the schools prefects.

One morning when I arrived at school, there was tremendous excitement. Upon unlocking the library that morning it was discovered that someone had - how can I put this - defecated on the seat of the school chair. Uproar!

It must have been about 1961 because as a sixth former I was able to go into the building before the bell for morning school, and along with quite a few others, I went up to witness the deed.

Three things struck me. One, the deed had certainly been done *in situ* - not placed there. Secondly, that it was likely to have been a junior or middle school boy, and thirdly, no paper had been used.

Deputy head "Gob" Wilson then arrived and we were all chucked out. Headmaster D J Coulson, whose attitude to wrongdoers has been very fully documented elsewhere (see below), had deputed the enquiries to Mr Wilson, who then deputed them to the prefects. In the same fashion, I might add that the senior caretaker deputed the cleaning operation to the most junior gardener.

The deed must have been done after school but before locking up. Although the library was little used after about 4.30. there was always the likelihood of a master or indeed a boy coming in, and with a door both at the upper end and in the middle, the risk of getting caught and not being able to do anything about it was very high!

The perpetrator was never discovered! The consensus was that it must have been one of the third or fourth form 'lads' engaging in a very risky prank, but unusually, no suspects' names ever spread around the schoolboy grapevine, and as a five day wonder interest soon flagged.

Of course, with adult hindsight, the solution may well have been very different. It could even have been the action of a very unhappy withdrawn boy whom nobody would suspect had grievances against individuals or the school in general. And part of that unhappy youth might have even half wanted to have been caught, if only to draw attention to his miserable existence.

But this was 1961, and, unhappily, the school regime at that time was centred strongly on corporal punishment, as described by Neil Lyndon in his book *A Boyhood in the Weald* (published 1998 by Pomegranate Press, ISBN 978-0951987681, currently out of print). Now there were signs of enlightenment amongst the

staff- Mr Wilson himself, and masters like Messrs Davis, Hanratty, Ambrose, Thomas, Sibley, Worthington and Henderson, amongst others who would have seen things in a more sympathetic light. But such subtleties would not have occurred to the head, who would most likely have reacted by beating and possibly expulsion rather than counselling and care.

Mr Coulson himself took the upper sixth for general English which involved his reading aloud the key sections of Restoration comedies with the rest of us following silently in dusty books. On Friday mornings we had PE with 'Ted' Palmer (period 3) followed by General English (period 4). One winter's Friday, we had nearly frozen to blocks of ice in the snow on the playing field, dashed in for a scalding hot shower, and flung on our clothes so as not to be late for the headmaster's lesson.

After about ten minutes, I started to feel sick in the heat of room 2 where we were located. It got worse and worse. I put my hand up, but Mr Coulson, in full flow, waved it down. A couple of minutes later, I knew the inevitable would happen. I got out of my seat, and hurried to the front where he was strutting to and fro. Without stopping, he waved me back to my seat with an impatient gesture, and as I opened my mouth to excuse myself, I was violently sick in front of him. Some of it splashed onto his highly polished black shoes and the bottom of his navy blue suit trousers; I rushed out of the door to the toilets.

I soon recovered, and after lunch, sought Mr Coulson out in his study to apologise. I was 17 at the time and highly embarrassed. As soon as he saw it was me, he said, "Oh, it's you!" very coldly. I was only able to utter about half a dozen words of my well rehearsed apology, when he got out of his chair, waved me to the door angrily, and said, "Get out of my sight. I don't want to see you again, you disgusting boy!" And that was that.

So, I wasn't as sorry as I might have been at having thrown up over the headmaster.

The identity of the boy who had polluted the school chair is no doubt lost in the mists of time. But, there remained a much lighter patch on the varnish on the seat of the chair which, whenever we saw it in its ceremonial guise, caused some of us to remember it had once served as a very different sort of throne. I wonder where that throne is today, with or without those blemishes on its varnish.

## RECEIVE YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-Mail

We are hoping to hear from still more members prepared to receive their newsletters by e-mail. All monies saved on publishing and distribution, as a result of this, can be red-assigned to other useful activities of the Association. And it arrives faster, and in glorious colour. To receive your newsletter by E-mail, please send your name and years of attendance at Collyer's, exactly as it appears in the Address List, to the Hon. General Secretary, ANTHONY BARNARD at: [ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com](mailto:ocawalnutclose@btinternet.com)

# Wartime Collyer's

**M**y parents, mother in particular, must have heaved a sigh of relief when at the age of 11, I started at Collyer's-School, the local grammar school whose history dated back to 1532.

In the-closing months of schooling at Denne Road, a group of friends and I used to frequent an area known as 'the river'. It was an area full of interest, especially after heavy rain when the Arun River tended to flood. The river had been diverted, to provide water for an old style flour mill whose large flat circular grinding stones were driven by a large water wheel, about 25ft in diameter.

The water flow from the mill bay passed through a picturesque area known as the Gardens of Remembrance. This was largely maintained at the expense of the wealthy and benevolent Mrs 'Nellie' Laughton, whose husband had been killed in the slaughter fields of France in the Great War.

Under normal weather conditions the river flowed steadily through these gardens but heavy rain during the winter months resulted in this low lying land becoming a lake - a great opportunity for heroic exploits. As boys we enjoyed many hours playing by the river. Time was forgotten and the hours slipped away so that even meal times were overlooked. My failure to arrive in time for the family evening meal must have caused great concern to Mum and Dad who could, no doubt, readily visualise all sorts of tragedy 'down at the river'. However, enrolment at Collyer's in September 1938 saved the day. There our working day ended at a later time, after compulsory school games, for which the headmaster was an enthusiasm, and there was no beckoning river or toilets to beguile the returning scholar on his homeward way.

As new boys we were assembled in the art room and given a copy of the Public School Hymn Book, this to remain with us throughout our days at Collyer's. The head prefect of the house to which we had been assigned then led us in single file into the school hall where all the other pupils were assembled for the opening of the autumn term. For our first year we remained in the front rank of our house during assembly each day. The following autumn the process was repeated when a new column of boys arrived to take their place in the front row.

In my day the school was organised on the public school house system. However, it bore little resemblance to a public school as the scholars were, almost without exception, day boys. Four or five boys lived with the headmaster in his fine home nearby to the school and they constituted the only boarders. In a public school the reverse would be the case with the parents paying very substantial fees for the privilege of their sons attending there.

Our day commenced with assembly in the school hall. The headmaster conducted the entire proceedings with prayers each morning and a reading from the New Testament. A hymn was sung on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

The school prefects took it in turns to read the lesson following the hymn for the day. Many of the hymns remain favourites of mine to this day. Whenever or wherever they are sung, my mind reverts back to that school assembly hall and the headmaster intoning from the Book of Common Prayer.

There are those, mainly teachers I believe, who favour the philosophy that one's school days are the best days of one's life. This is not a view to which I would subscribe.

After a moderate result in the Oxford School Certificate examination of 1943, I moved into the sixth form. This two year course was in preparation for the higher school certificate examination, success in which would provide ready access to a university. Methods of study were an introduction to those of university and those two years were probably the more enjoyable of my days at Collyer's. A modest prowess at soccer gave me a position in one of the school teams and Saturday afternoon games with other schools in the district were always a pleasure. This was the more so when we played away games with a hired bus to take the team to the venue. Other schools always seemed to serve a more appetising tea at the conclusion of the game too. During a game which we won against East Grinstead Grammar School, a collision with one of their players resulted in a broken front tooth for me. The evidence remains to this day, the tooth now with a gold capping obvious to the sharp-eyed observer. As a soccer enthusiast, my father was very gratified when I received my school colours for soccer. Earlier the headmaster had seen fit to appoint me as a school prefect, which among other responsibilities included reading the lesson at assembly. Wonderful training but a daunting experience at the time.

I left Collyer's in November 1945 just after the cessation of hostilities in both Europe and the Far East. My school leaving certificate carried the message, "This is not a Higher School Certificate". I had obtained good passes in my chosen subjects of English, geography and history but the examiner in French had said "non" and success in four subjects was necessary to secure that Higher School Certificate. Dismayed but more than happy to leave school, I joined the Royal Air Force at Padgate on 3 December 1945 having received my call up papers two weeks earlier.

*(An extract from a book by Jim Partridge, who was at Collyer's 1938-1945, submitted by Jim's brother and fellow Old Collyerian Alan)*

# AGM and Winter Reunion 2012

**T**he best ever' : 'a great success' : 'an excellent evening' - these are just a few of the comments received following the above and who am I to disagree? The Dinner seemed to go with added zest this year, no doubt the location of the Duckering Hall is more user friendly and having the bar in the Memorial Hall is much better too. We're also lucky to have such an excellent caterer in Dave Hughes with all his staff, and the meal produced this year was superb, as was the service from the bar - where else can you get such reasonably priced drinks? Also the company there was pretty good too! Nice to see some new faces and let's hope this continues in the years to come. It was great to catch up with old friends and make a few new ones.

The speeches were concise and well executed and I'm sure I wasn't the only one impressed by the comments of the Students' Representative, Ella Saitch. The evening eventually came to a close just before midnight and I think it's more than fair to say that 'a good time was had by all'. As our new President said, 'it was a brilliant start to his year in office'.

The AGM in the afternoon was better attended than for some while with 19 members present. The revised constitution was approved: you can find a copy of this on our website. We were pleased to welcome Stewart Mackman as our new Hon. Treasurer and pleased that

Anthony Barnard has agreed to continue (with a little help/?hindrance from yours truly) as Hon. Sec. for a further year. However, we must find a new person for this post at the end of the current OCA year as Anthony will *not* be continuing for 2014. *Please give this matter your consideration.*

We were surprised when our incoming Vice President, Jim Pullen, produced for us a banner for the OCA which had been made by a good friend of his. This received its first public outing at the Dinner. Eric Austin has agreed to try to source a manufacturer to produce a copy of the 'Old Lady' badge which can be added to the banner to make it complete and we look forward to this.

A vote of thanks was given to two retiring members of the previous Committee, Paul Smith and Brian Sturt, for their work over the years on behalf of the OCA. The five 'general Old Collyerian' members for 2013 are Gary Jones, John Meese, Peter Ticehurst, Lawrence Windwood *et moi*; the office holders for this year are as per page 1.

Please note the date for this year's Winter Reunion is, as always, the third Saturday in November; in this case Saturday 16 November 2013. We would hope to see as many of you as possible there.

Information on the Summer Reunion can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, on page 5.

*Derek Sturt*



*Incoming president Bill Thomson is installed by his predecessor Peter Holmes (left); the raffle was, always, a great success thanks in no small way to Derek Sturt's salesmanship (pictures by Mark Collins)*

## Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge and Chapter

The Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge is almost as old as the OCA, having been formed in 1927, while the Chapter is a mere junior having been formed in 1958. Both are very active organisations and meet regularly at Horsham Masonic Hall. The Lodge members would be delighted to hear from any old Collyerians who would like further details or who might be interested in joining.

Full details may be obtained from:  
Peter R Ticehurst, Flat 32, Bowes Close, Horsham RH13 5SZ.

# Jottings

We were sorry to read of the death, last year, of **Geoffrey Philip Manvell**, who attended Collyer's between 1936 and 1941. He was born in Horsham, on 1 March 1925; and died peacefully in his sleep, on 3 November 2012, at home in Newick, East Sussex, aged 87.

He was an only child but had many cousins, including Derek Edwards, another Old Collyerian. Geoffrey sang in the choir at St Mark's, Horsham, and learned piano and organ. At Collyer's he excelled at modern languages, which set him in good stead for later life. On leaving school he joined Barclay's Bank in Horsham until called up in 1943, resulting in him joining the Royal Corps of Signals. When posted to Lowestoft in 1944 he noticed messages sent by a Captain Eric Manvell, who he discovered was a second cousin once removed.

Post D-Day, Geoffrey sailed to Normandy and moved through France and Belgium, stopping to play the organ in Bayeux Cathedral on the way. Needless to say, his knowledge of French gained at Collyer's proved invaluable.

On arrival at the Dutch border he spoke in Flemish to some children begging for cigarettes. One of them, Lieva, rushed home and came back with an invitation to supper - the friendship remained to Geoffrey's death through Leiva's daughter, granddaughter and great-granddaughter.

The final months of WWII were spent in India and Malaya, and following the Japanese surrender, Geoffrey was on the first ship to enter Singapore since its capture. He remained in the East until 1947, assisting many different chaplains by accompanying the singing of hymns.

Back in civvy street, Geoffrey rejoined Barclay's in Horsham, and then was posted to Henfield. In 1950, he married Ruth, who lived in Billingshurst, and had corresponded with him during the war.

Sadly, Ruth died of lung cancer in 1978, aged 54. In 1954, Geoffrey was accepted at Barclay's Chief Foreign Branch in the City. Following success in Spanish in the Institute of Bankers' Commercial Diploma, he spent a year in Spain. Then, in 1963, he was appointed Departmental Manager at the correspondence department, resulting in trips to South America, Austria, Germany and Portugal. From 1974, he was in charge of foreign training for potential instructors at the bank's training centre in Wimbledon.

In 1981, he married his second wife, Eleanor, who was yet another cousin. They settled in Eleanor's home in Newick, where, particularly after retirement in 1985, he became involved in village life including 10 years as organist in the local church. He became very much involved in charitable work, until calling it a day at the

age of 75, but still played the organ in various local churches from time to time.

Health problems over the last few years failed to dent his Christian faith, and he is remembered, according to the address at his funeral service, as a good listener, good company, and a real English gentleman of the old school - a lot of fun and always pleased to be involved.

**Malcolm Bailey**, who was at Collyer's in the 1960s, won the 'Contribution to School Sport' award in the Aviva/Telegraph School Sport Matters Awards 2012. Malcolm has been teaching at Charterhouse for nearly 39 years, and plans to retire to South Yorkshire in July. The award was mentioned at the OCA Winter Reunion, and the association has sent its congratulations. Malcolm, who says he is a "nostalgic creature who regrets losing touch with most of [his] contemporaries", has promised to write about his work for a future newsletter.

The poor winter weather and late snows affected the **College of Richard Collyer** in Horsham and it was necessary to close on a number of dates - the last being March 12th. This, says principal Jackie Johnston, makes for a difficult time for the College which is not always appreciated by the parents. One little known fact is that the College has a snow plough on standby annually during the winter months - unfortunately the hire period had ended in February before we got some of the worst snowfalls.

The College has appointed a **Sports Maker**, John Burroughs, jointly funded by Sport England's Active Colleges Programme, with the aim of involving 14-25 year olds and the local community, including those with disabilities, in sport. More information can be found on the College website

You may recall from previous newsletters that the College has an ambitious **development programme**, originally involving three building phases, which began in 2007. This has now been red-scheduled as two phases, with the first phase completed, and Horsham District Council has now approved the next round of development. Rather surprisingly the application had been opposed by Sport England, on the grounds that some of the playing field area was likely to be lost. However the overall sport provision will increase, so fortunately the Council saw sense and granted the application. An item about the playing fields, written in support of the College's application, appears elsewhere in this newsletter. The need for planning permission is an important part of the process of applying for

funding, which is likely to be a long process, so don't expect too many changes at the College in the next few months. The College's current property strategy is centred around improving the Duckering Hall as a performance area. Some funding is expected from the Mercers' Company, which will be most welcome, and the extent of the improvement will depend on the funds gathered. A very high priority, fortunately, is to improve the comfort of the seating.

There has been discussion recently about a new 'Free School' funded by various Horsham churches, and intended to be built in the Southwater area. This had caused some concern to the College, but things seem to have gone quiet lately so maybe its promoters agree that an extra school in the area is not necessary.

At the last OCA committee meeting we unanimously co-opted **Andrew Campbell**, who we hope will be able to take over the Secretary position, from which Anthony

Barnard has been trying to retire for some time. Andrew has many recollections of Collyer's in the 1960s, notably the hard winter of 1963 when the school was only very grudgingly closed when the outside loo's froze solid - no such luxuries as snowploughs 50 years ago.

**Maj Gen Harry S. Wood**, although not a member of the OCA, was certainly in the running for the title of the oldest Old Collyerian before he passed away peacefully at the beginning of March, six months short of his 100th birthday. He was born on 16 September 1913, and commissioned into the Army in 1939, serving in the Royal Artillery. By 1964 he had reached the rank of Major-General, and he retired in 1967.

**Thanks** to all contributors to this maximum-sized newsletter. There are a couple of other 'recollections' items that had been submitted but lack of space means we have had to hold them until next time.

## College News

*Recent press releases from the College of Richard Collyer in Horsham:*

**C**ollyer's students have brought home a Gold and Bronze medal from the prestigious British College Sport (BCS) National Finals, held at the University of Bath. Rebecca Lobley won Gold in the Women's 50m Breaststroke and Dan Barna won Bronze in the Men's Single Table Tennis.

A team of 18 athletes from Collyer's attended the BCS National Finals, having been selected to represent the South East team following their success at regional events earlier this season. This prestigious event saw over 2000 of the country's top sports men and women competing in over 14 sporting disciplines.

In addition to the Gold and Bronze medals, Collyer's students also excelled in golf and hockey. Luke Bennett made a strong effort in the Men's Golf, despite the adverse weather conditions, and finished 9th in the country. The Women's Hockey team, led by team captain Rachel Kimberly, played seven games over the three day event and only lost one game. Despite having the same number of points as Richard Huish College, based in the South West, they missed out on the bronze medal on goal difference - one goal! Their solid defence and excellent performances from goal keeper Meg Jones, meant they only conceded 3 goals in the whole tournament. They can be very proud in being crowned the 4th best college Hockey team in the country.

James Gordon, Head of Faculty for Business, Sport and Social Science was thrilled: "It was great to see a number of athletes from Collyer's representing the

*The Collyer's swimmers*



South East Region at this national sporting event. They should be really proud of themselves for their success. Horsham and the surrounding area are producing an ever growing range of elite level athletes. The recent development of our partnerships with local schools and the district council and the increased funding received by Sport England should see this level of success continue. "

A delighted Principal, Dr Jackie Johnston said: "We are incredibly proud of our outstanding sports department and the achievements of our gifted athletes. It is a huge honour for Collyer's students to represent the South East region and to be recognised on the national stage."

**I**n January, over 200 staff and students from Collyer's heard a testimony from Holocaust survivor, Prof Ladislaus Löb, as part of a visit organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust (HET).

The visit was part of the Holocaust Educational Trust's extensive all year round Outreach Programme, which is available to schools and colleges across the UK.

Karen Pollock MBE, Chief Executive of the Holocaust Educational Trust explained: "The Holocaust Educational Trust educates and engages students from across the UK, from all communities about the Holocaust and there can be no better way than through the first-hand testimony of a survivor. Ladislaus' story is one of tremendous courage during horrific circumstances and by hearing his testimony, students will have the opportunity to learn where prejudice and racism can ultimately lead."



Professor Löb told the audience that he was extremely impressed that so many had attended the talk. After his testimony, a question and answer session enabled students to better understand the nature of the Holocaust and explore its lessons in more depth.

Dr Jackie Johnston, Principal of Collyer's said: "It was a privilege for us to welcome Professor Ladislaus Löb to our college and his testimony will remain a powerful reminder of the horrors so many experienced. We are grateful to the

Holocaust Educational Trust for co-ordinating the visit and we hope that by hearing Ladislaus' testimony, it will encourage our students to learn from the lessons of the Holocaust and make a positive difference in their own lives."

## Membership

Personal details of other members are available only in the version of this newsletter sent to OCA members by email or post.